

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT LEONE'S SOVIET VISIT

1. PRESIDENT AND MRS. GIOVANNI LEONE, ACCOMPANIED BY FOREIGN MINISTRE RUMOR, DEPART ROME NOVEMBER 18 FOR A SIX DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION. THE CHIEF OF THE MFA'S SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN OFFICE, GIORGIO VECCHI, WHO RECENTLY SPENT SIX DAYS IN MOSCOW NEGOTIATING THE FINAL DOCUMENTS FOR THE VISIT, RECENTLY BRIEFED US ON THE OUTLINES OF THE VISIT.

2. ACCORDING TO VECCHI, THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO BE ATTACHING SUBSTANTIAL IMPORTANCE TO THE VISIT IN AN ATTEMPT TO ADVANCE BILATERAL POLITICAL RELATIONS TO THE SAME PLANE AS BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS. FOR THEIR PART, THE ITALIANS DO NOT EXPECT ANY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS, BUT SEE THE TRIP AS KEEPING THE ITALIAN HAND IN THE EVOLUTION OF THE DETENTE PROCESS.

3. VECCHI HAS INFORMED US THAT THE WORK ON THE FINAL DOCUMENTS IS ESSENTIALLY COMPLETE. AT THE SOVIET REQUEST THERE WILL BE A FINAL SIGNED JOINT DECLARATION WHICH WILL, AT ITALIAN INSISTENCE, DEAL WITH SUBSTANTIAL MATTERS DISCUSSED BY LEONE AND HIS SOVIET INTER-

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TIVE MATTERS DISCUSSED BY LEONE AND HIS SOVIET INTER-

LOCUTROS. THERE WILL ALSO BE A FINAL COMMUNIQUE WHICH WILL CENTER ON PROTOCOLARY ASPECTS OF THE VISIT. THE SOVIETS WERE DISTRESSED THAT THE JOINT DECLARATION WOULD HAVE TO BE SIGNED AT THE RUMOR-GROMYKO LEVEL SINCE THE ITALIAN PRESIDENT DOES NOT HAVE THE POWER TO SIGN ACTS ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT.

4. ASIDE FROM THE SECTION OF THE JOINT DECLARATION DEALING WITH HUMAN CONTACTS (CSCE BASKET III), THE ITALIANS DID NOT FEEL THAT THEY ENCOUNTERED ANY UNUSUAL PROBLEMS WITH THE SOVIETS DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS. REGARDING CSCE IN GENERAL, THE ITALIANS INSISTED THAT BOTH PRINCIPALS AND MEASURES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI DOCUMENT BE TREATED EQUALLY AND TOGETHER IN CONTRAST TO THE SOVIETS WHO WANTED THEM IN SEPARATE PARAGRAPHS. THERE WILL BE A LENGTHY SECTION ON DFA ARMAMENT, INCLUDING THE VIENNA TALKS, ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS WERE SOMEWHAT COOL TO THIS LINKAGE. ON THE MIDDLE EAST THERE WILL BE NO MENTION OF STEP BY STEP DIPLOMACY AT SOVIET INSISTENCE WHILE THE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIANS TO "A HOME" WILL BE RECOGNIZED. THE SECTION DEALING WITH CYPRUS ACKNOWLEDGES THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNAL TALKS AND MENTIONS THE NEED FOR THE GREEK AND TURKISH COMMUNITY TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF THEIR COMMON STATE.

5. AT THE TIME OF OUR BRIEFING, THE ONLY MAJOR OUTSTANDING DISAGREEMENT ON THE JOINT DECLARATION WAS OVER BASKET III ISSUES. (WE HAVE SINCE LEARNED THAT THESE HAVE BEEN IRONED OUT, BUT HAVE NOT GOTTEN THE SPECIFICS.) THE SOVIETS INSISTED THAT THEY DO NOT SEE THE NEED TO RESTATE IN BILATERAL CONTEXT MATTERS WHICH HAVE BEEN ENUNCIATED IN THE FINAL DOCUMENT AT HELSINKI. A KEY ITALIAN OBJECTIVE IN THE BASKET III CONTEXT WAS A SOVIET COMMITMENT FOR THE FURTHER MOVEMENT ON THE QUESTION OF MISSING SOLDIERS FROM WORLD WAR II. WHILE THE ITALIANS HAD ACCEPTED IN 1959 A STATEMENT THAT NO ITALIANS SOLDIERS REMAINED IN THE USSR, THEY HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT A LIMITED NUMBER OF FORMER ITALIANS IN THIS CATEGORY REMAIN IN THE USSR WITH SOVIET CITIZEN-
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SHIP ACQUIRED IN THE EARLY POST-WAR PERIOD. THEY WOULD LIKE A FINAL CLARIFICATION OF THIS POINT AND, IF SOME FORMER ITALIANS INDEED REMAIN IN THE USSR, SOME PROVISIONS FOR FACILITATING VISITS WITH THEIR RELATIVES EITHER HERE IN ITALY OR IN THE USSR IN THE CONTEXT OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION. THE ONLY INDICATION OF MOVEMENT ON THIS SUBJECT WAS A HINT THAT SOME VAGUE TYPE OF ACCOUNTING OF MISSING ITALIANS COULD TAKE

PLACE THROUGH RED CROSS CHANNELS. (SINCE MRS. LEONE IS HONORARY PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN RED CROSS, THE ITALIANS ARE MILDLY HOPEFUL THAT THE SOVIETS WILL MAKE SOME SORT OF POSITIVE GESTURE ON THIS ISSUE DURING THE VISIT.) CONCERNING OTHER ITALIAN DESIRES IN THE BASKET III AREA SUCH AS EXPANSION OF CULTURAL CONTACTS, PUBLICATION OF LITERARY WORKS, SALE OF NEWSPAPERS, THE SOVIETS TOOK AN EXCEEDING NEGATIVE POSITION ARGUING THAT THEY WOULD NEVER EVEN PRESENT THESE SUBJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION TO THEIR AUTHORITIES. THEY CONTENDED THAT THESE WERE ONLY MINOR PORTIONS OF THE HELSINKI DOCUMENT WHICH WERE BEING BLOWN OUT OF PROPORTION.

6. FINALLY, THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE WILL CONTAIN A REITERATION OF THE INVITATION TO BREZHNEV TO VISIT ITALY AT A MUTUALLY CONVENIENT DATE IN THE FUTURE. VECCHI STATED THAT THE SOVIET SIDE INSISTED THAT THIS BE INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNIQUE. BEAUDRY

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